

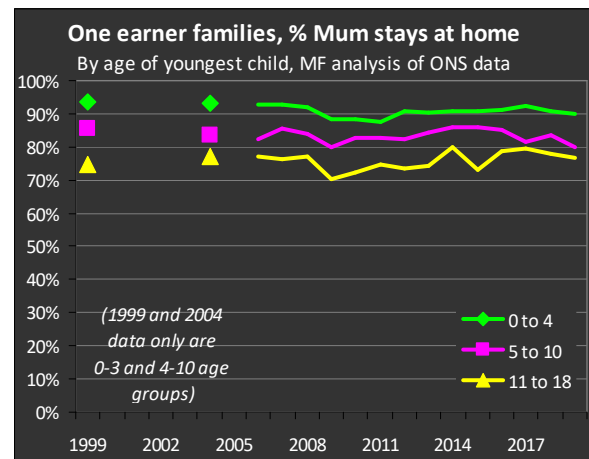
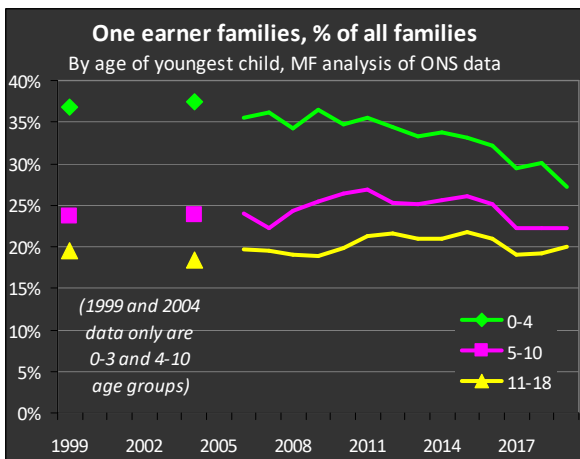


# Marriage Foundation

## One earner families

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- Despite significant policy efforts to encourage both parents into work, our analysis of new ONS data shows little reduction in one earner families across the past two decades, and no change at all in the proportion of those families where dad is the earner and mum remains at home.
- Throughout 1999 to 2019, a consistent one quarter of all families had only one earner. For families with the youngest child under 4, this proportion was one third. Only in the last 3 years, possibly related to the introduction of Universal Credit, has this dropped to 27%.
- However during the same period, dads have remained the earner and mums have stayed at home in at least 90% of all one earner families with children under 4, and 80% of those with older children. The introduction of up to six months shared parental leave in 2015 has yet to have any impact whatsoever on this gender imbalance.
- I have long argued that nine months of pregnancy automatically orientates a mum to her child far more than a dad. This has big implications both for public policy – the special role of a mother toward her child – and private stability – the special role of a father toward the mother.
- This evidence suggests that two decades of public policy initiatives – that try to equate men and women as if the same – have fallen foul of human nature – that men and women are different.



### Data sources:

ONS (2014) Working couples by child age 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014: data commissioned for Marriage Foundation

ONS (2017) Families living with dependent children by family type, full or part time employment, age and number of dependent children, 2006 to 2017, England

ONS (2018, 2019) Families and the labour market, England: main dataset using the Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey

### One earner families as % of all families with children

Youngest child	1999*	2009	2014	2019
0 to 4	37%	36%	34%	27%
5 to 10	24%	25%	26%	22%
11 to 18	20%	19%	21%	20%
All families	27%	28%	28%	24%

### One earner families where dad is the earner

Youngest child	1999*	2009	2014	2019
0 to 4	94%	88%	91%	90%
5 to 10	86%	80%	86%	80%
11 to 18	75%	70%	80%	77%
All families	87%	83%	87%	84%

\*Note that 1999 data is for 0-3 and 4-10 year olds